



Congressman Dan Lungren, Representing California's Capital Region - 3rd District

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Dear Friend,

One of the pleasures of serving in the United States Congress is the opportunity to hear from constituents. Exchanging viewpoints on the major issues facing our nation is an important aspect of the democratic process. Since January 2005, it has been my goal to have an ongoing dialogue with the citizens of the 3rd District through traditional and telephonic town halls as well as e-mails. It is in this context that I would like to invite you to participate in another such exchange. Below you will find a short statement concerning my thoughts on the current circumstances that we face in Iraq. You will also find a questionnaire that I would invite you to complete concerning your views on this matter. Your participation in this survey would be most appreciated and helpful.

It goes without saying that we can all agree things have not progressed as we had hoped they would in Iraq. This is a point which the President himself acknowledged in his speech to the nation on January 10, 2007. On the one hand, there is solace from the fact that the Iraqi people have chosen their nation's leadership in democratic elections and have ratified a constitution that represents a dramatic departure from the rule of one of the most repressive regimes on the globe. At the same time, however, it is this very

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**Please join me at my next  
Town Hall Meeting in  
Folsom!**

**Monday, February 26  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

Folsom City Hall  
Council Chambers  
50 Natoma Street  
Folsom, CA 95630

**Constituent Information  
Fair:**

**Saturday, March 3  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

City of Citrus Heights  
Garden Room  
6237 Fountain Square Drive  
(at Greenback)  
Citrus Heights, CA 95621  
Call (916) 859-9906 for  
more information

*Representatives from the  
IRS, Veteran's Administration,  
U.S. Postal Service, Medicare,  
and Social Security will be  
available to answer your  
questions.*



hope of democracy that has led those extremists who fear such a prospect to lash out in a wave of violence. Political reform presupposes a certain level of stability and those most threatened by progress have sought to use murder as an instrument of chaos.

The question of whether we should have initially gone into Iraq has ceased to be a relevant question in terms of the formulation of a policy response to the circumstances we currently face. The fact is that we are there, and that is the unpleasant reality which must be addressed. Sound bites and Congressional Resolutions aimed at placing blame are not a substitute for the formulation of necessary policy prescriptions by those who have the responsibility to protect the security of the American people and the honor and credibility of the United States.

In this regard, it is clear that there must be changes in our nation's policy in Iraq. The ultimate objective of turning over the security of their country to the Iraqi government must be a primary focus of that policy. However, as Secretary of Defense Gates has explained, the reduction of violence in Iraq will produce the conditions which are most compatible with achieving that purpose. The often-heard mantra that a political solution is the only way to end the hostilities in Iraq misses the point. As military historian Victor Davis Hanson points out, "only a military blow to the insurgency will allow the necessary window for the government to gain time, trust and confidence to press ahead with reform and services." As Hanson points out, it was only the success of Generals Sheridan and Sherman on the field which made Lincoln's political agenda of emancipation and

## Your Turn

Please take a few moments  
to share  
your views on the war in  
Iraq.  
Thank you.

**Looking back, do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against the Taliban in Afghanistan?**

- ☐ Right
- ☐ Wrong
- ☐ Unsure

**Looking back, do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq?**

- ☐ Right
- ☐ Wrong
- ☐ Unsure

**Generally speaking, do you think our success in Iraq is linked to keeping America safe from another terrorist attack?**

- ☐ Iraq is linked
- ☐ Iraq is not linked
- ☐ Unsure

**Should the U.S. keep military troops in Iraq until the country's emerging democracy is secure and can defend itself, or should we bring our troops home as soon as possible regardless of any potential impact on security in the U.S. or Iraq?**

- ☐ Secure Iraq
- ☐ Bring troops home
- ☐ Unsure

**Here are four potential different strategies the U.S. could follow in dealing with the war in Iraq. Which ONE do you**

reunification possible.

It is in this context that the increase of 20,000 U.S. troops slated for Iraq must be viewed. This is not intended to be a unilateral commitment which would have the effect of supplanting an expanding role by the Iraqi military and security forces. Rather, American units will be embedded within Iraqi formations to help them hold neighborhoods wrested from violent groups within Baghdad and Anbar Province. While the Iraqi government's past performance has been cause for some concern, our expectations concerning their role are built into the new strategy. In fact, the strategy as a whole is predicated upon the responsibility of the Government of Iraq to meet "benchmarks" which have been established by the United States as conditions precedent to the implementation of the plan itself.

Although the challenges before us relate to the formulation of policy, this should not be considered in a vacuum. For the most important asset of the United States in Iraq is the quality of the men and women of our armed forces. In this regard, the person charged with the responsibility of implementing the new policy, General David Petraeus, is well suited to perform such a task. In addition to his experience in the area around Mosul, Iraq, he is the co-author of the recently released military field manual on counter-insurgency doctrine. History provides us with examples where military commanders who have been brought into the theater of operations in order to turn around what seemed at the time to be less than promising—as illustrated by the appointments of General Grant and General Patton to name two such examples. If there were ever a need for such leadership in Iraq, it is

**prefer? Withdraw all troops from Iraq immediately? Withdraw all troops by January 2008, or some other specific date? Withdraw troops only after Iraq is stabilized? OR, Send more troops to Iraq now?**

- ☐ Withdraw immediately
- ☐ Withdraw by date certain
- ☐ Take as long as needed
- ☐ Send more troops
- ☐ Unsure

**Should the U.S. set a timetable for withdrawing troops from Iraq?**

- ☐ Should
- ☐ Should not
- ☐ Should get out now
- ☐ Unsure

**Some have suggested Congress should try to block the President's plan to send additional troops into Iraq by withholding funding. Do you support Congress withholding funding for these troops?**

- ☐ Withhold funds
- ☐ Do not withhold funds
- ☐ Unsure

**Some have suggested Congress should try to cap the number of troops in Iraq. Do you support putting a limit on the number of troops that can be deployed in Iraq?**

- ☐ Cap troops
- ☐ Do not cap troops
- ☐ Unsure

**Some have suggested Congress should pass a non-binding resolution opposing the President's new strategy in Iraq. Do you think Congress should pass such a resolution, or does that send the wrong message to our troops and our enemies?**

- ☐ Pass resolution

now. General Petraeus will be a critical component to our prospects for progress.

In this regard, the United States Senate confirmed General Petraeus unanimously. During his confirmation hearing before the Armed Services Committee, he was praised by Members on both sides of the aisle and received various exhortations concerning the ominous task before him. Now that he has been placed in the position of leading our young men and women in Iraq, it defies imagination that Congress would conceivably deny him the support necessary to accomplish that very task. There is a logical incongruity in wishing General Petraeus "Godspeed" on the one hand, while opposing the strategy he believes to be essential to the success of his mission.

The need to meet the challenge of stabilizing Iraq -- primarily in Baghdad and Anbar Province -- is essential to the orderly withdrawal of American forces. Any precipitous action which fails to accommodate this concern would likely have untold consequences for innocents within Iraq, the broader Middle East, and ultimately the security of the American people.

Again, however, it must be emphasized that the long-term success or failure of Democracy in Iraq will rest with the Iraqis themselves. As Faoud Ajami of Johns Hopkins University has pointed out, we have given the gift of freedom to the Iraqi people, which by nature entails the conclusion that their future is in their own hands. The new strategy recognizes that our remaining days in Iraq must be dedicated to making this transition possible.

I hope to see you at my upcoming Town Hall

☐ Wrong message

☐ Unsure

**As you know, the President has outlined a new, four-pronged plan to help us succeed in Iraq. The President's plan includes sending in roughly 20,000 additional troops, increasing diplomatic efforts, increasing economic assistance and requiring the Iraqis to take more responsibility for their own security. Do you favor or oppose the President's new strategy?**

☐ Favor

☐ Oppose

☐ Unsure

**Please share any additional comments you have.**

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Meeting in Folsom.

Sincerely,



Daniel E. Lungren  
Member of Congress

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